A MATRIX FOR APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT OF WORKPLACE LEARNING IN STEM DISCIPLINES

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ABSTRACT
With increasing interest shown by Universities in workplace learning, especially in STEM disciplines, an issue has arisen amongst educators and industry partners regarding authentic assessment tasks for work integrated learning (WIL) subjects. This paper describes the use of a matrix, which is also available as a decision-tree, based on the features of the WIL experience, in order to facilitate the selection of appropriate assessment strategies. The matrix divides the WIL experiences into seven categories, based on such factors as: the extent to which the experience is compulsory, required for membership of a professional body or elective; whether the student is undertaking a project, or embedding in a professional culture; and other key aspects of the WIL experience. One important variable is linked to the fundamental purpose of the assessment. This question revolves around the focus of the assessment: whether on the person (student development); the process (professional conduct/language); or the product (project, assignment, literature review, report, software). The matrix has been trialed at QUT in the Faculty of Science and Technology, and also at the University of Surrey, UK, and has proven to have good applicability in both universities.

Keywords: *Authentic Assessment, Work-integrated Learning, Assessment matrix, assessment purpose, assessment alignment.*